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County: Lander

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Legal NO 2917

Opportunity to Comment

USDA Forest Service, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

Austin-Tonopah Ranger District,

Lander County, Nevada

The Forest Service, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Austin-Tonopah Ranger District, is seeking input on the a proposal to authorize the Nevada Department of Wildlife to remove non-native fish from streams within the Arc Dome Wilderness and reintroduce the native Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) back into areas where they historically occurred.

The Nevada Department of Wildlife has proposed chemical treatment of two stream systems, within wilderness, as part of an inter agency effort with the USFWS and the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest to re-establish and perpetuate the LCT. The LCT is an indigenous species of concern that has been adversely affected by human influence and is listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Removal of non-native trout would be through the use of the piscicide rotenone in the Upper Reese River and Steward Creek. LCT would be stocked in the streams once monitoring shows that the non-native species have been eliminated. The specific methods for each of the two stream systems are out-lined in a detailed Scoping Document that is available at each District Office and can be sent electronically by re-request. The implementation of the Upper Reese River treatment would be done under low flow conditions that exist in below average precipitation years. Up to 23.1 miles of stream are proposed to be treated. Under low flow conditions portions of the Upper Reese River and isolated reaches within its tributaries can have dry stream reaches. This will enable the treatment to be conducted in two smaller segments and without the need to construct temporary fish barriers.

The Stewart Creek treatment is logistically different from the upper Reese River Treatment. The four stream miles to be treated within wilderness are within one-half mile from Forest Service Road 119. The Columbine Campground Recreation Site is located immediately adjacent to Stewart Creek and the Arc Dome Wilderness Area.

COMMENT PROCESS

Individuals and organizations wishing to comment and be eligible to object must meet the information requirements of 36 CFR 218 Subpart A and B. It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them by the close of the comment period. Only those who submit timely and specific written comments regarding the proposed project during a public comment period established by the responsible official are eligible to file an objection under ?218. Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, and electronic comments concerning this action will be accepted for 30 calendar days following the publication of this notice in the Tonopah Bonanza Times. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for this analysis. Those wishing to comment should not rely upon dates of timeframe information provided by any other source. The regulations prohibit extending the length of the comment period. The notice will be published in the Battle Mountain Bugle and the Tonopah Times-Bonanza. This request for public input initiates the scoping process under the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 218). Scoping allows the Forest Service to identify important issues and determine the extent of analysis necessary to make an informed decision on a Proposed Action. It is expected that the actions being proposed will require analysis level under NEPA to be either a Categorical Exclusion or Environmental Assessment. Questions on the proposed activity can be directed to Jim Harvey, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Fisheries Biologist by email jimharvey@fs.fed.us or phone (775) 355-5343.

Written comments must be submitted to: Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Attn: Lance Brown, District Ranger, 100 Midas Rd. Austin, NV 89310; submitted by FAX (775) 964-1451; or to the facsimile number (775) 964-2671. The office hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are: 8:00?4:30 Mon-day-Friday, excluding holidays. Electronic comments must be submitted through the web-based Comment and Analysis Response Application (CARA). The project webpage can be located at:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=52997>. Click the Comment tab under ?Get Connected? on the right side of the page. Attachments to comments must be submitted only in one of the following formats:

Microsoft word (doc), rich text format (rtf), or Adobe Portable Document format (PDF). Please use the term ? Arc Dome Fish Restoration Project? in the subject line of your comments. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to a comment, a verification of identity will be required for objection eligibility.

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